

Swannanoa Players Prove That Anything Is Possible

Energetic Director Brings One-Seventh of Her School 270 Miles to Dramatic Conference.

By MARION ALEXANDER

When Mrs. Louise S. Perry bundled her 21 Swannanoa High School Players into the Buncombe County school bus Thursday morning a week ago and set out for the State Dramatic Tournament here she took exactly one-seventh of the little high school enrollment with her.

The distance ahead was 270 miles. The way was punctuated with many a bump, for school trucks don't ride like limousines. And the financial resources were none too heavy.

But the group set out with a will. They had come through to the finals in the county play production class and they were as devoted in their quest of the State honors as if they had been romantic knights of old seeking the Holy Grail.

State Title Their Reward

Perseverance and devotion had its rewards. The Swannanoa players defeated Severn for the State title in the finals of the contest here for country production honors—and that victory looms as a testimonial of what can be done, despite all handicaps, if the doers have the will.

There were more than 150 official delegates to the Dramatic Festival and Tournament, which is an annual event of the Carolina Dramatic Association. There were contests for production of original and professional plays in which county and city high school, college, and community dramatic clubs took part. It was a splendid tournament with great spirit from the aspiring drama builders, but there was probably not another group that came through as many trials and difficulties to reach its goal as the group from Swannanoa.

No Support for Dramatics

Swannanoa High is a fine little consolidated school. It is new and lodged in a splendid plant, with a good auditorium and stage, but there has never been any support for dramatics.

The subject was only included in the curriculum last year after Mrs. Perry had come to direct plays and show what could be done.

Swannanoa this year won from Grace and Derita for the right to compete in the finals. And then, after these performances, to the treasury was flat and there were no funds for the long trek to Chapel Hill!

Big Cast—More Share Benefits

Mrs. Perry had especially selected a play with a big cast so she could have as many students as possible benefit from the dramatic work and the experience. And it takes money to transport a group of 21 young boys and girls 270 miles and back and put them up three days.

A council of war was called and an active campaign for funds launched. The township school committee gave funds for the gas and oil and the bus driver. People of the town chipped in to pay the production expenses. Parents willingly donated expense money for their children in the cast. (You see, dramatics is a community venture at Swannanoa, which carries with it an intense community pride.)

And thus they came. They presented "Sir David Wears a Crown," Stuart Walker's pretty little fantasy, and the real enthusiasm and spirit which the young players put into their acting elicited much admiration and applause from the audience that saw them.

Now They're Champions!

The judges gave them the decision. Now the little group has gone back home CHAMPIONS, and Swannanoa will have an even more intense and justified pride, and dramatics a stronger foothold.

The Swannanoa group really played under a handicap. Mrs. Perry purposely selected a play with a large cast to maximize the participation and benefits for students. She had to fill 21 parts in a school whose total enrollment was not 150, and naturally she could not get the best cast under such conditions. But spirit such as theirs admits no handicaps.

Mrs. Perry Director

Mrs. Perry is a little woman who beams with energy and enthusiasm, which she reflects in her students. When congratulated on her success and asked if she thought it would lead to school support next year, she sounded the note which has brought the little club to the fore. Said she: "We are not even asking for financial support. We are on our own."

They have been exactly that since Mrs. Perry began dramatics at Swannanoa when she went there from Lancaster, Missouri, two years ago.

Beginning with next to nothing, Mrs. Perry has literally "sold" drama to Swannanoa. The students are vitally interested. The school authorities give every co-operation possible. And the people back the efforts of

POSTER CONTEST WINNERS PICKED

Winston-Salem Boy Wins Class "A" Division in Contest.

Theron Snider, of Winston-Salem, Joe Hadlow, of Rocky Mount, Harold Staling, of East Durham, and Raymond Fink, of Spencer, were announced as the winners in the four divisions of this year's North Carolina high and elementary school poster contest.

Snider won first in the Class A high school division with his poster, "Travel! A by-word for Education." Hadlow's poster which won first prize in the Class B high school division was entitled "The Hope of Democracy."

First prize in the class A elementary school was won by Harold Staling's poster, "Save our Friends," and Raymond Fink won the Class B prize with his "Studios Prosper."

The judges were William Steen, local artist; Harold Meyer, University professor of sociology; and Samuel Selden, technical director of the Carolina Playmakers.

Carolina Tar Heels Play In Virginia

Alex. Mendenhall and his Carolina Tar Heels have returned from State Teachers College, Farmville, Va. They played the spring dance while at this school.

It will be remembered that the Tar Heels definitely determined their position on the campus in a recent battle of music. The orchestra has also come rapidly to the front in neighboring states, where it has worked up an enviable reputation. It has just been learned that they will play the final dances at Hampden-Sydney College. They have also been booked to play at several other schools and colleges in the Old Dominion state.

Notice

There will be a very important meeting of the Rifle Club Wednesday night at eight o'clock in Gerrard Hall. Officers for the coming year will be elected, and plans for the remainder of this quarter will be discussed. All members of the club are urged to be present.

After several days of inactivity, the infirmary now has four patients staying in the building. George Gleaton has German measles, L. H. Hole is suffering from dental trouble, Donald Wood has a severe cold, and Roy Armstrong came to the infirmary Sunday night with a case of ptomaine-poisoning.

Recipe for a happy life: Work; Laugh; Have a Job; Get a Hobby.

the little group to the utmost.

Nine Plays This Year

They have put on nine one-act plays this year. Three performances in as many weeks netted gate receipts of forty, fifty, and seventy-three dollars in that little village, when admission was only 15 and 30 cents! Derita in the semi-finals of the contest at Swannanoa presented Loretto Carroll Bailey's "Job's Kinfolks"; yet the Swannanoa group presented the same play the next week and the crowd was as large as at the first performance. They have really won the town's support.

E. N. Howell, who is principal, co-operates in every way to help Mrs. Perry, and she is also aided by her husband, Oliver Perry, a former teacher of dramatics.

Self-Supporting

Self-supporting all the way, the little group has always made enough to supply costumes and scenery and general expenses. They have accumulated in the two years 36 costumes and 2 interior sets.

Now, with the increased boon of a State title won, and the new community pride which will transcend all the old bounds, they can well be expected to outdo themselves in the future. They may well be held up as part, and a characteristic part, of the State's renaissance in drama.

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HIGH ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION TO MEET ON MAY 18

Present Method of Conducting State Title Races to Be Discussed Here Next Saturday.

The meeting of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association at Chapel Hill on Saturday, May 18, is sure to be productive of major change in the scheme of football, baseball and basketball competition, leaders in the association say after a committee meeting Thursday at High Point and a western conference at Salisbury some days ago.

At both of these sessions, the high school men expressed an earnest desire that the association continue to function but an equally earnest desire for a sharp modification of championship contests.

Guy B. Phillips, superintendent of the Salisbury schools and a leading figure in the association, reports the practically unanimous stand of representatives of 19 larger western high schools for an abandonment of the state championship idea in high school athletic competition and the substitution of a conference plan by which high schools would meet schools of similar sizes in smaller districts of the state. The present scheme of championship contests after the close of the regular playing season was deemed unwieldy and productive of a too-intense competitive spirit. It does not promote the basic idea that all athletics should be an essential part of the physical education program in the state and an essential part in general education.

The committee meeting at Salisbury was in thorough accord with the views expressed at Salisbury and arrangements were made to bring these views before the state association at Chapel Hill. Mr. Phillips says that the group A schools of the state will work out a conference plan if a satisfactory amendment is not made to the present constitution. There is already an eastern conference with 14 high school members. It has been in operation for two years and is said to be satisfactory. Another such conference might be formed in the west and perhaps others in various parts of the state and for schools of various classes.

A proposed amendment to the association's constitution has been mailed to all members and is to be considered at Chapel Hill on the 18th. It proposes certain changes but does not go as far as the program to which practically all the western schools subscribed at Salisbury. This amendment would provide for eastern and western conferences among the six, seven or eight largest high schools in each division of the state and for percentage play in football, baseball and basketball in each conference, with the option of the conference

meeting in a state championship if they so desire. All other schools below this large size group would take part in contests leading up to Class B championships of the state, with elimination contests in eight districts, four in the east and four in the west.

Western school leaders regard it as almost certain that this plan will be refused at the state meeting and that a more drastic restriction of championship play will be insisted upon.

The school men of the state have come to the conclusion that physical education is a part of the general education program or that it has no place in the public schools, Mr. Phillips says. It is agreed that athletics must be a phase of physical education in order to be justified. It is because of this conviction that the school men have determined to get away from the mad scramble for championship honors and for the publicity honors centering around the present scheme of competitive athletics.

The fight is not against the association or against the state university. It is against the present method of conducting contests. The executive committee of the state association is composed of superintendents and principals and the athletic committee of the state university. The public school men hold a majority membership on the executive committee and the responsibility for the present organization is rather on them than on the university, as some have thought.

It is regarded as certain that the state meeting will be productive of important changes in methods of high school competition.

Dr. Meyer Delivers Sermon In Durham

Dr. Harold D. Meyer, head of the department of sociology, delivered the sermon at the morning services of the First Baptist church in Durham last Sunday. Dr. Meyer is considered one of the best informed and most interesting speakers in the state and was well received by Durham people.

Mr. Yates McDonald, graduate student here, delivered the sermon at the evening services of the same church.

House To Talk In Chapel Today

R. B. House will address the chapel audience this morning on the subject of "Democratic Institutions in North Carolina," which is one of a series of talks being made to the freshmen on the history and resources of the state. House's address was originally scheduled for Monday but was postponed due to the extraordinary condition created by the Yellow Journal controversy which necessitated the delivering of a speech by Ray Farris, President of student government.

DR. COKER TO BE DELEGATE TO SCIENCE MEET

(Continued from page one)

versity members. Two papers by Dr. E. K. Plyler in cooperation with Theodore Burdine and T. J. Steele were on Infra-red Absorption Spectra of Alcohols and Some Organic Nitrates.

Prof. Stuhlman and Mr. M. W. Trawick presented a paper on the Electroless Discharge through Mercury Vapor.

The Chemical Section was as usual predominantly Chapel Hillian. When twenty out of a total of twenty-six papers are presented by one institution, then that institution is outstanding in that field. The topics ran through the whole gamut of chemistry, starting with Bromination of Dihydroxynaphthalene to the intricate constitution of Shrimp Oil.



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